

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF REPORTAGE OF TRAVELING PRESS,
SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1974

FOR ANDERSON FROM KING

SUMMARY: HAK'S FINAL EFFORTS SHARE TIME/SPACE WITH ZEIGLER
ANNOUNCEMENT PRESIDENT WILL VISIT ME IN NEAR FUTURE. ALL
STORIES/BROADCASTS DETAIL ISRAELI-SYRIAN EFFORTS TO EXTRACT
LAST POSSIBLE CONCESSION BUT ALL ALSO AGREE SECRETARY ON
VERGE OF HISTORIC AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY

1. KALB, VALERIAN BOTH UPBEAT ON PROSPECTS FOR AGREEMENT
IN PERIODIC BROADCASTS, AS WITH KALB EX DAMASCUS: IT'S A
CLIFF-HANGER. HAK REFUSES EITHER TO PROCLAIM VICTORY OR
CONCEDE DEFEAT. GOI APPARENTLY HAS AGREED TO HIS COMPROMISE
PLAN. IF ASSAD NOW AGREES HAK WILL HAVE CONCLUDED AN
HISTORIC AGREEMENT BETWEEN TWO OLD AND BITTER ENEMIES.

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COLLAPSE OF HIS HOPES IS POSSIBLE BUT UNLIKELY. NOBODY,

HAK INCLUDED, MAKING ANY FINAL JUDGMENTS BUT ASSUMPTION IS HE'LL BE BRINGING HOME A WRAPPED UP DEAL TO CELEBRATE HIS 51ST BIRTHDAY.

2. GWERTZMAN MAKES IT OUTSIDE BUT BELOW FOLD ON PAGE 1 WITH 800 WORDS- IT'S HIS FIRST EDITION STORY MERELY REPORTING SATURDAY'S DAMASCUS ARRIVAL, LEADING WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS REPORTING THIS MAKE-OR-BREAK PHASE (IN QTES), ADDING HAK'S CONVICTION HE MUST WRAP IT UP IN NEXT 24 HOURS OR RETURN TO WASHINGTON WITHOUT FINAL AGREEMENT. REPORTS THAT HAK, IN TALKS CONTINUING ALL DAY, ALL NIGHT IN ISRAEL, EXTRACTED GOL'S FINAL CONCESSIONS WHICH PERMIT HIM TO PRESENT "AMERICAN PLAN" TO ASSAD AT LATE SATURDAY AFTERNOON MEET. QTES SENIOR ISRAELI OFFICIAL THAT 93 PERCENT OF AGREEMENT NAILED DOWN BUT AMERICAN SAYING THERE IS NO GUARANTEE REMAINING 7 PERCENT CAN BE CONCLUDED. "THEY ONLY PAY OFF IN THIS BUSINESS IF YOU HAVE 100 PERCENT, "THIS OFFICIAL SAYS, ADDING, "IN ANY OTHER NEGOTIATION, IF IT COMES THIS FAR, IT WAS BOUND TO SUCCEED," BUT BOTH SIDES HAVE HAD HANG-UPS AT EVERY STAGE. GWERTZMAN REPORTS BOMB THREAT DELAY AND GOES ON TO DISCUSS PROS, CONS OF KEEPING MISSION GOING. SAYS HAK AND HIS AIDES STRESS PRIVATELY THAT SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT CRUCIAL TO ARAB-AMERICAN TIES, PEACE IN THE AREA, STRENGTHENING OF ARAB MODERATES AND REDUCTION OF SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA. MOREOVER, HE ADDS, IF TALKS BREAK OFF WITHOUT COMPLETION, POINTS ALREADY ACHIEVED MIGHT BEGIN TO UNRAVEL IN ANY "RECESS," AND CONCLUDES: "THERE ARE POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS INVOLVED AS WELL- FAILURE TO ACHIEVE,AN AGREEMENT MIGHT WELL BE INTERPRETED BY SOME AMERICAN POLITICAL COMMENTATOR AS A REFLECTION OF MR. NIXON'S WEAKNESS IN NOT BEING ABLE TO GET ISRAEL AND SYRIA TO MAKE THE NECESSARY COMPROMISES. MR. NIXON HAS WANTED AN ACCORD BECAUSE OF HIS PLANS TO VISIT THE MIDDLE EAST SOON."

3. LA BERGER IS BURIED INSIDE POST (P-20) UNDER THIS 8 COLUMN HEAD: "DETAILS" SAID TO BE DELAYING ISRAEL-SYRIA TROOP ACCORD. OBVIOUSLY FILING LATER THAN GWERTZMAN, SHE QTES HAK ON SATURDAY NIGHT DEPARTURE TO EFFECT HE'LL RETURN TO SYRIA TODAY TO DISCUSS "SOME FURTHER DETAILS UNCLASSIFIED

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WITH ASSAD, THEN QTES SENIOR AMERICAN THAT WHILE HAK IS CLOSE TO AGREEMENT BUT GAP NOT YET CLOSED ON TROOP THIN-OUTS. THIS OFFICIAL SAYS BOTH PARTIES AT "ABSOLUTE LIMIT" OF THEIR CONCESSIONS, WHICH BERGER JUDGES TO MEAN BOTH SIDES TRYING TO EXACT LAST BIT OF FLEXIBILITY (SIC). SHE SAYS SECRETARY'S SELF-IMPOSED DEADLINE TO RETURN HOME CLEARLY DESIGNED TO PRESSURE BOTH SIDES, THAT WHILE HE CAN'T OPERATE AS AREA DESK OFFICER INDEFINITELY AND

WOULD "LIKE" TO GO HOME, THE MONDAY NIGHT RETURN SCHEDULE LOOKS LESS FIRM NOW OWING TO SYRIAN "WRINKLE" ON TROOP THIN-OUT WHICH EMERGED IN LATEST TALK WITH ASSAD. REPORTS THAT MAW, ATHERTON LEFT BEHIND IN DAMASCUS TO PUT FINISHING TOUCHES ON THOSE ISSUES ALREADY SETTLED, AND CONCLUDES WITH REPORTAGE ON 75TH DAY OF FIGHTING IN THE GOLAN.

4. JERRY O IS ON PAGE ONE REPORTING HAK FAILED TO GET FINAL AGREEMENT BUT CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT RECESSING THE NEGOTIATIONS BECAUSE TWO SIDES ARE SO CLOSE TO IT. QTES SECRETARY ON DEPARTURE DAMASCUS AFTER 5 HOURS OF TALKS WITH ASSAD: "WE CONTINUED OUR DETAILED EXAMINATION AND ELABORATION OF VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF A DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT . . . I WILL RETURN TOMORROW TO DISCUSS SOME FURTHER DETAILS." REPORTS SENIOR OFFICIAL IN HAK PARTY AS SAYING HE IS "REALLY QUITE CLOSE" TO AGREEMENT AND BELIEVES IT WILL BE ACHIEVED. ALSO REPORTS HAK OBVIOUSLY CHANGED HIS MIND ABOUT RECESSING THE TALKS LAST NIGHT AND GOES ON TO QTE THE US OFFICIAL THAT HAK BELIEVES HE WOULD BE "NUTS" TO BREAK OFF NOW IF THERE IS ONLY A PARAGRAPH OR TWO TO BE WORKED OUT. SO HE NOW APPEARS LESS CERTAIN OF RETURNING TO WASH AS LONG AS HE THINKS HE CAN COMPLETE THE MISSION. AFTER RECOUNTING RECENT TRAVEL SCHEDULE, JERRY O SAYS HAK APPEARS TO BE DEPENDING ON THE INJECTION OF THE AMERICAN PLAN AS HIS TRUMP CARD. THE ADVANTAGE OF A PROPOSAL WITH A US LABEL ON IT, HE SAYS, IS THAT THE TWO ADVERSARIES HAVE DOMESTIC RESISTANCE TO ACCEPTING PLANS PRESENTED BY ONE ANOTHER BUT MIGHT REASONABLY ACCEPT HAK'S DISENGAGEMENT PLAN. ALSO HAS A US OFFICIAL SPECULATING ABOUT RESTORATION OF DIPRELATIONS WITH SYRIANS IN THE NEXT FOUR, SIX WEEKS IF ALL GOES WELL. GOES ON TO SAY WHILE NO SPECIFIC DETAILS

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WERE AVAILABLE ON PRECISE TERMS OF HAK'S PLAN, IT IS KNOWN THAT ISRAEL IS PREPARED TO WITHDRAW FROM ITS MOST FORWARD POSITIONS ALONG THE FRONT FROM MT HERMON TO THE RAFID AREA AND TO GIVE UP CONTROL OF THE KEY JUNCTION TOWN OF KUNEITRA. CENTRAL PORTION OF THIS NEW LINE WOULD BE ENCOMPASSED BY A UN BUFFER ZONE, WHICH SYRIA WOULD ADMINISTER.

5. BOTH AP AND UPI REPORTING MOST RECENT COMINGS, GOINGS STRAIGHT WITHOUT MUCH EFFORT AT ANALYSIS.

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